

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 ACDA-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 /083 W
-----036561 180134Z /64

R 171757Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4865
INFO USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 00896

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, BQG
SUBJECT: FRG CONCERNS ABOUT SOVIET CALL FOR QA
CONSULTATIONS

REFS: (A) USBER 0026
(B) 77 BONN 21415
(C) 77 BONN 1731
(D) 77 BONN 10763 (EXDIS)

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE US BONN GROUP REP DISCUSSED THE
SUBJECT WITH FRG REP VON BRAUNMUEHL ON JANUARY 12,
DRAWING FROM REF A. VON BRAUNMUEHL EXPRESSED GRATITUDE
AND SAID THAT THE FOREIGN OFFICE'S CONCERNS HAVE BEEN
ALLAYED BY THE ALLIED REACTION. THIS WAS REPEATED BY
FRG REPS IN THE JANUARY 13 BONN GROUP MEETING, WITH THE
STATEMENT THAT THE FRG WOULD EXPECT SUCH A SOVIET MOVE
ONLY IF THERE WERE A CHANGE IN EAST-WEST RELATIONS.
END SUMMARY
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1. ON JANUARY 12, THE US BONN GROUP REP DISCUSSED
PRIVATELY WITH FRG BONN GROUP REP (VON BRAUNMUEHL)
THE STATEMENTS OF FRG CONCERN (REF B) THAT THE SOVIETS
MIGHT BE PREPARING A CASE FOR CONSULTATIONS UNDER THE
QA. HE DREW EXTENSIVELY ON REF A (WHICH WE COMMEND
AND APPRECIATE) AND ADDED HIS OWN VIEW THAT THERE DOES

NOT SEEM TO BE ANYTHING UNUSUAL ABOUT RECENT SOVIET MOVES WHICH WOULD INDICATE AN INTENTION TO CALL FOR CONSULTATIONS. VON BRAUNMUEHL AGREED WITH THIS VIEW, SAYING THAT HIS PURPOSE IN RAISING THE QUESTION HAD BEEN TO ELICIT ALLIED VIEWS AS TO WHETHER THE SOVIETS APPEARED TO BE BUILDING A CASE. HE SAID THAT SINCE THE ALLIES DID NOT THINK THE SOVIETS HAD ANYTHING SPECIFIC IN MIND FOR THE NEAR FUTURE, THE FOREIGN OFFICE WAS SATISFIED THERE WAS NO IMMEDIATE CAUSE FOR CONCERN.

2. THE US REP ASKED WHETHER THE INITIAL CONCERN CAME FROM HIGHER LEVELS IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE OR FROM VON BRAUNMUEHL'S OFFICE. VON BRAUNMUEHL SUGGESTED THAT IT WAS THE LATTER SAYING HIS OFFICE HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR KEEPING MORE SENIOR LEVELS INFORMED AND THAT A POSSIBLE SOVIET CALL FOR CONSULTATIONS IS OF COURSE ONE OF THE ISSUES TO WHICH IT MUST BE SENSITIVE.

3. ON JANUARY 13 THE MATTER AROSE IN A BONN GROUP DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE ITEMS WHICH WILL BE COVERED AT AN UPCOMING QUADRIPARTITE AMBASSADORIAL LUNCHEON IN BONN. THE FRENCH REP (RICHARD) ASKED WHETHER THE FOREIGN OFFICE WANTED TO INCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF A SOVIET DEMAND FOR CONSULTATIONS AS A TOPIC. VON BRAUNMUEHL SAID THAT THE FOREIGN OFFICE HAD NO INTENTION OF RAISING IT BUT WOULD OF COURSE BE PREPARED

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TO DISCUSS IT IF OTHERS WISHED TO. VON BRAUNMUEHL SAID THAT THE FOREIGN OFFICE DID NOT FEEL THE SOVIETS HAVE A BASIS FOR DEMANDING CONSULTATIONS BUT WONDERED WHETHER THEY WERE BUILDING A CASE. FOR THAT REASON HE HAD SOLICITED ALLIED VIEWS AND THE VIEWS RECEIVED THUS FAR CALMED FRG CONCERNS -- NOT THAT THE FOREIGN OFFICE WAS ALL THAT CONCERNED. WHILE HE SAID HE SAW NO NEED TO HAVE THIS DISCUSSED AT AN AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL, HE CONTINUED TO BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO OBSERVE DEVELOPMENTS WITHOUT THE NEED FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION.

4. THE UK REP COMMENTED THAT THE FACT REMAINS THAT WE HAVE NOT HAD CONSULTATIONS THRUST UPON US ALTHOUGH WE HAVE ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS FEARED WE MIGHT. THE US REP NOTED THAT THIS WAS A SUBJECT OF CONCERN EARLY LAST YEAR (REF C) AND COMMENTED THAT, IN VIEW OF THE GDR ATTEMPTS TO ELIMINATE THE DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN EAST BERLIN AND THE GDR, WE AT LEAST HAVE A BASIS FOR COMPLAINING TO THE SOVIETS ABOUT GDR VIOLATIONS OF THE QA.

5. VON BRAUNMUEHL SAID THAT HE BELIEVED TWO CONDITIONS

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 00896

MUST EXIST BEFORE THE SOVIETS WILL CALL FOR CONSULTATIONS.
FIRST, THERE MUST BE A CHANGE IN THE BROAD INTERNATIONAL
SITUATION WHICH LEADS THEM TO BELIEVE THEY CAN BENEFIT
FROM A CRISIS OVER BERLIN AND, SECOND, THERE MUST BE A
SPECIFIC EVENT WITH WHICH THEY CAN JUSTIFY A DEMAND
FOR CONSULTATIONS.

6. FRG DEPUTY BONN GROUP REP WEGENER LATER ADDED
WHAT HE TERMED AN ADDITIONAL NUANCE TO WHAT VON BRAUN-
MUEHL HAD SAID. HE SAID THAT IF THE SOVIETS ARE BUILDING
A CASE, THIS MUST BE ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE CONTINGENCY
PLANNING OF THE THIRD EUROPEAN DEPARTMENT OF THE SOVIET
MFA. A DEMAND FOR CONSULTATIONS WOULD, IN THE FRG
VIEW, REQUIRE HIGH LEVEL SOVIET APPROVAL (E.G. AT THE
POLITBURO, NOT JUST WORKING LEVEL). THE FOREIGN
OFFICE'S ANALYSIS OF OVERALL SOVIET POLICY IS THAT THE
CHANCE OF THE SOVIETS MAKING A DECISION OF THIS MAGNI-
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TUDE IS RATHER SMALL. THE INSTABILITY CAUSED BY THE BREZHNEV SUCCESSION PROBLEM DOES NOT LEAVE MUCH ROOM FOR LONG TERM MOVES OF THIS KIND WHICH COULD LEAD TO A MAJOR EAST/WEST CRISIS. THE EXPECTED BREZHNEV VISIT TO THE FRG IS AN ADDITIONAL FACTOR WHICH SHOULD DISSUADE THE SOVIETS FROM DEMANDING CONSULTATIONS. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION, HE SAID THE FOREIGN OFFICE HAS NOT YET RECEIVED REPORTS FROM ANY OF ITS POSTS BUT THIS MAY BE IN PART BECAUSE THE FOREIGN OFFICE EXPRESSLY STATED THIS SHOULD BE REGARDED AS A MATTER FOR LONG TERM CONSIDERATION OVER THE COMING YEAR.

7. COMMENT: THE DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT THESE CONCERNS WERE EXPRESSED LAST JANUARY (REF C), ALTHOUGH VON BRAUNMUEHL'S PREDECESSOR APPARENTLY DID SO WITH LESS ANALYSIS OR MUSTERING OF FACTS. THE VIEW THAT THE SOVIETS ARE PRESUMABLY NOT PLANNING TO SEEK A RENEGOTIATION OF THE QA IS CONSISTENT WITH WHAT THE GERMANS WERE TOLD IN MOSCOW THE MIDDLE OF LAST YEAR (REF D), ALTHOUGH A GREAT DEAL HAS SINCE TRANSPIRED.

8. OUR CONCERN ABOUT THIS MATTER HAS, AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, BEEN NOT SO MUCH THAT WE SHARE THE VIEW THAT THE SOVIETS ARE BUILDING A CASE WITH AN EYE TO REQUESTING CONSULTATIONS BUT THAT SUCH A VIEW, IF HELD BY THE FOREIGN OFFICE, COULD COLOR THE FRG REACTIONS TO ALLIED VIEWS ON BERLIN POLICY. IT APPEARS THAT THE ALLIED REACTION HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN ALLEVIATING THESE CONCERNS AND THAT THEY WILL NOT HAVE TO BE AN INHIBITING FACTOR WITH WHICH WE MUST RECKON AT THE PRESENT TIME.
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